

# Behind the Scenes



CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

*The* EDITH *and* LORNE PIERCE  
COLLECTION *of* CANADIANA



*Queen's University at Kingston*



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# Behind the Scenes



A STORY OF THE  
DINING CAR —  
COMMISSARIAT

**CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS**  
*The Largest Railway System in America*

Wm 1920's

Printed in Canada

*We may live without poetry, music  
and art;*

*We may live without conscience, and  
live without heart;*

*We may live without friends; we may  
live without books;*

*But civilized man cannot live without  
cooks.*

*He may live without books—what is  
knowledge but grieving?*

*He may live without hope—what is  
hope but deceiving?*

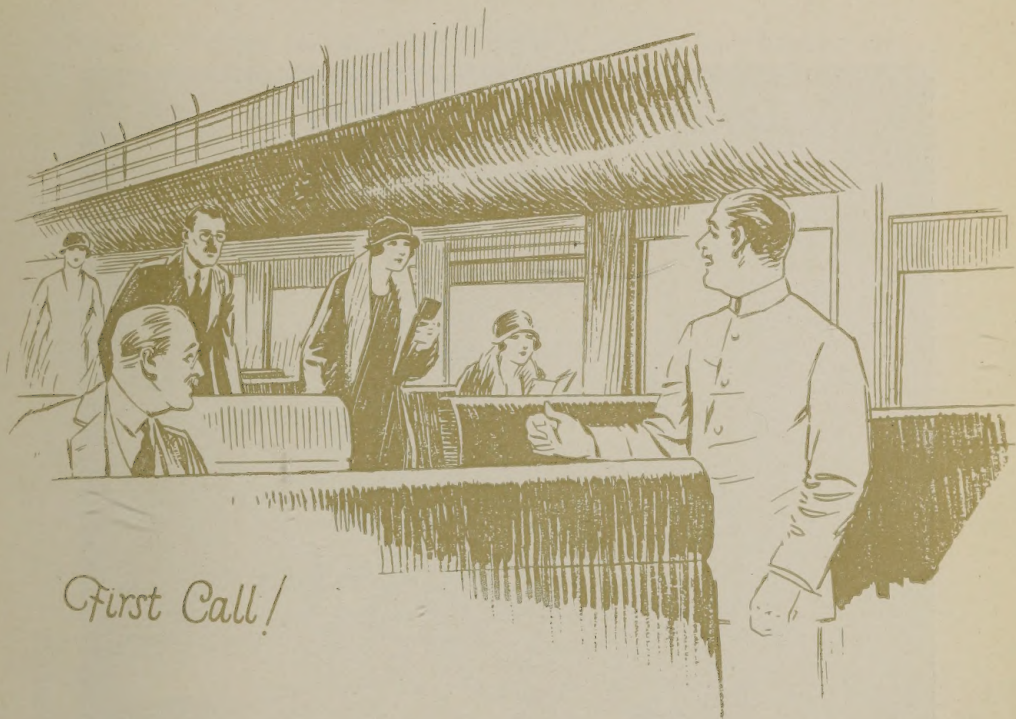
*He may live without love—what is  
passion but pining?*

*But where is the man that can live  
without dining?*

OWEN MEREDITH.



# THE DINING CAR COMMISSARIAT



**F**EW of us travel so consistently as to lose entirely that slight thrill that comes upon boarding a train for an overnight or an all day journey. We are off—going somewhere—and all the luxuries of the age seem fitted into those long, smooth trains for our especial favor.

Soon, but never too soon, a smiling waiter in snowy white comes through the train and announces "First call for dinner." As we enter the diner a steward in blue leads the way to a spotless table, white and silver beneath its load of china, glass and cutlery. No hotel in the world can thus seat all its guests next to windows nor supply a change of scene with every course!

With faultless precision the dishes are laid before us. They appear from that enclosed space, no more than fourteen feet long, beside which we passed on entering. This display of magic arouses curiosity. We would gladly peep behind the scenes just to see how the trick is done. These pages lay bare the secrets of the Commissariat but, strange to say, do not belittle the wonder of it all by frank exposure.

A yacht or ocean liner vies with a dining-car in intricacy of perfect appointments, yet the latter has a great advantage. Its larders are the gardens and orchards past which it runs. The



# THE DINING CAR COMMISSARIAT



*Standard Dining Car*



# CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

ranks of trees bearing their weight of apples just turning ripe; the lake that mirrors the sunset, where trout are jumping; the herd of cattle hidden to the knees in lush grass,—these may all supply the dining-car with fresh necessities on its return journey. Like wise generals, the Commissary buyers believe in “living on the country.”

Guests write their own orders and bills are made out upon the original slips, thus preventing mistakes in service or charges. Let us follow one of these orders into the kitchen to observe the “cordon bleu”, bend an attentive eye upon it and hasten to prepare the wanted dishes.

## THE KITCHEN

One side of the kitchen, seven by fourteen feet all told, contains a great range with broiler and steam table. Ice chests and sinks occupy most of the space opposite, so that the chef, in an aisle twelve by two and a half feet, is encompassed by everything necessary to the preparation of a sumptuous meal. Special compartments of the range warm plates, platters and cups for imme-



*The steward is your host*

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# THE DINING CAR COMMISSARIAT



*Standard Dining Car Kitchen*



*District Storeroom Refrigerator—Fruits, etc*



# CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

diate service. Directly opposite, fruit, sea-food, game—all the delicacies of the season—are packed in ice. Biscuits, rolls and pies are baked fresh every day in this little kitchen. Bread and cake, supplied daily, are stored in a specially constructed bread-box.

## THE STOREROOMS

The Steward, whose ordering is indeed an art, selects just enough of every kind of food and refreshment to meet his passengers' needs until arrival at the next terminal storeroom. He does not attempt to procure supplies from merchants en route, as it is well nigh impossible thus to obtain the high standard of food stocked by the Railway Company. The Commissary buyers, however, located at various points along the line, comb the local markets in an attempt to outdo their nearest rivals in the matter of seasonable delicacies and fine staple produce. Perishable supplies, such as meats, fresh fruits, fish, etc., are placed in the car ice-chests in prime condition, as they are ordered in just sufficient quantities to take care of the day's requirements from each distributing point.

Every storeroom is equipped with mammoth refrigerators in which are stocked fresh meats, poultry, butter, eggs, etc., delivered direct from the wholesaler. The poultry and eggs are of the choicest, being supplied by the Government Experimental Farms at various points on the Railway System. The best



*Quick service starts at the kitchen*



# THE DINING CAR COMMISSARIAT



*District Storeroom Refrigerator—Milk, Cream, etc.*



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brands of groceries, such as flour, coffee, sugar, salt, etc., are chosen with quality as the first consideration.

Operation of these storerooms has reached a high mark of efficiency. There are shelves stacked high with china; closed cupboards containing fresh linen; drawers of silver (each piece of table service bears the crest of the Railway); bins for bottled goods; refrigerators, spotlessly clean, with stores of freshest food,—down to humidors containing after-dinner cigars and cigarettes. Everything is so orderly, so well-planned as to arouse the enthusiasm alike of business man or housewife.

## THE STEWARD

A competent business manager is the dining-car Steward. He assumes entire responsibility for stocking his car, (with requisitions for supplies submitted to the Storekeeper), for the service to his patrons, the conduct of employees, the care of food supplies and the collection of revenue. He submits complete reports covering the business done each trip. By following a



*You are assured of thoroughly inspected meats*

# THE DINING CAR COMMISSARIAT



*District Storeroom—Soiled Linen Sorting Room*



*District Storeroom*



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printed booklet issued for his use, he standardizes each branch of his work, so that table set-up, size of portions, and every detail of service is in exact accordance with that which obtains on all dining-cars on the System. Furthermore, he is invariably a man of pleasing personality, possessed of tact and authority so blended as to assure the commendation of his guests and the obedience of his staff.

## THE CHEF

High responsibility rests upon the head of the dining-car Chef. He brings to his work the temperament of an artist with the judgment of a business man and thus produces, without waste, those delicacies that you look for upon your own table or in the restaurants of a great hotel. Roll making and pastry cooking are among his first accomplishments.

The Chef and his assistants work under very trying conditions, the atmosphere in the kitchen sometimes reaching 120 degrees. Nevertheless, they keep up the round of service with a smile on their faces and a cheerful word for the waiters, who are also laboring under difficult conditions in a small dining room



*Game and poultry are carefully preserved*

# THE DINING CAR COMMISSARIAT



*General Storeroom—Silver*



*District Equipment Room*



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and with the motion of the train to contend with in the service to the passengers.

To the kitchen staff, therefore, must be given a large share of praise for the success of the meals placed before the guest.

## HOUSECLEANING

At regular intervals each dining-car is taken into the Railway Shops for renovation. China, glass, silver and kitchen equipment are removed while the car goes through that process of cleaning, painting and general renovation covered by the one word, "shopping." Silverware is replated; china or glassware if chipped is replaced. The Chef's pots and pans are thoroughly burnished and re-tinned if necessary. Knives are sharpened and all other articles of equipment are given the special attention required to put them in first class condition. When the car is released from the shop it is fresh and inviting—like new.

Each kind of ware is stored in a separate locker, constructed for ready access by employees and for protection of the articles en route. Linen, white jackets, dishtowels—everything white down to the Chef's big cap—are drawn from the linen storeroom and placed on board after careful checking. So the dining-car returns to the road ready in every respect to serve its patrons, like a long banquet room with covers laid for many guests.

## BEHIND THE SCENES

In a theatre of war, for every man in the line there are many men keeping up communication and supply. These are the boys behind the scenes, who work faithfully but unsung. In the Dining-Car Department, if we consider the smiling, attentive waiters as those in the line, we may readily visualize the numbers of other loyal workers who make the service not only possible, but who accelerate and smooth it to the perfection that it now maintains. In appreciation of their work we have prepared this little book for the favor of the travelling public.



WALTER PRATT,  
*General Manager,*  
Sleeping and Dining Car Department,  
MONTREAL, QUE.

E. W. SMITH,  
*General Superintendent,*  
Sleeping and Dining Car Department.  
MONTREAL, QUE.

# THE DINING CAR COMMISSARIAT



*General Storeroom—Chinaware*



# CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS



*District Storeroom—Cigar Humidor*



*General Storeroom—Linen Repair Department*



# THE DINING CAR COMMISSARIAT



*District Storeroom Refrigerator—Meats, etc.*



*District Storeroom—Stocking Cars*



# HOTELS of Distinction

Open  
All Year

CHATEAU LAURIER - Ottawa, Ont.  
THE FORT GARRY - Winnipeg, Man.  
THE MACDONALD - Edmonton, Alta.  
PRINCE EDWARD - Brandon, Man.  
PRINCE ARTHUR - Port Arthur, Ont.

## SUMMER HOTELS

July 1 to  
Sept. 30

HIGHLAND INN  
Algonquin Park, Ont.

June 18 to  
Sept. 2

MINAKI LODGE  
Minaki, Ont.

June 15 to  
Sept. 15

NIPIGON LODGE  
Orient Bay, Ont.

June 28 to  
Sept. 2

GRAND BEACH HOTEL  
Grand Beach, Man.

May 21 to  
Sept. 30

JASPER PARK LODGE  
Jasper, Alta.

June 28 to  
Sept. 12

PICTOU LODGE  
Pictou, N.S.

WALTER PRATT,  
General Manager,  
Hotel Department,  
MONTREAL, QUE.

A. S. McLEAN,  
General Superintendent,  
Hotel Department,  
MONTREAL, QUE.

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